

[19th December 1922]

*Oriya tracts in the Presidency.*

609 Q.—SRIMAN SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo: Seeing that the population of Berhampur and Ichchapuram taluks, Ganjam district, is preponderatingly Oriya (vide G.O. No. 103, Public, dated 4th February 1922), will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state how and why these taluks do not appear in the list of Oriya tracts in appendix II of G.O. No. 658, dated 15th August 1922—Public Service—Communal Representation?

A.—The Government do not admit the correctness of the assumption on which the question is based.

SRIMAN SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo:—“Do the Government admit the correctness of the figures in G.O. No. 103 referred to in this question?”

The hon. Sir CHARLES TODHUNTER:—“I ask for notice, Sir.”

*Administration of land customs in the Pondicherry border.*

610 Q.—MR. K. SITARAMA REDDIYAR: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact

(1) that groups of British villages in the frontiers of Pondicherry are entirely surrounded by French villages and similarly some French villages by British villages;

(2) that in some border villages a portion of a house is British and the other French;

(3) that the British subject who goes to purchase vegetables such as plantains and coconuts in an adjacent French village has to take the things so purchased to the British Customs to get them assessed to duty, the Customs office being sometimes situated at a distance of four or five miles from his residence;

(b) whether it is a fact that British goods worth more than Rs. 10 cannot directly pass on to their destination, whether British or French, but should go via a land customs British chauki which in many cases is at a great distance from the direct route;

(c) whether it is a fact that on account of these land customs duties much hardship is felt by the subjects of both British and French villages situated on the frontier;

(d) whether it is a fact that great discontent and agitation prevail in the frontier villages for the relaxation of the rules applicable to land customs;

(e) whether there is any proposal to mitigate this trouble caused in the administration of land customs; and

(f) whether there is any proposal on the part of Government to cancel land customs duty at least on the produce and indigenous manufactures in these frontiers?

A.—(a), (b) & (c) The statement of the facts is to all intents and purposes correct.

(d) The condition of affairs described has prevailed for a great many years and the Government are not aware of any recent discontent or agitation.